



SATHYA SAI EDUCATION in Human Values

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Institute of Sathya Sai Education South Europe

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Introductory paper
proposed by the Institute
of Sathya Sai Education
for South Europe

January 2011

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION: SSEHV AND EDUCARE

If we want to grow an oak tree, first we must plant an acorn. If we want our children:

- ♥ to develop a strong, healthy and happy character;
- ♥ to be able to distinguish between 'right and wrong', and
- ♥ to cultivate higher values with loving sensitivity and a sense of unity with all beings,

then we, ourselves, must first prepare the ground and offer them a socio-educational environment in which they can grow and flourish. This is, in a few words, the aim and goal of Sathya Sai Education, whose main purpose is to shape and form character.

"True education does not merely enable a child to learn how to earn his/her living; it equips the child for life."¹

Sathya Sai Education in Human Values, from here on referred to as SSEHV, is a simply structured educational programme for teachers, parents and children, which cultivates and promotes universal Human Values common to all cultures and creeds. Its intrinsic characteristics are the firm conviction:

- ♥ that true education is a lifelong learning process;
- ♥ that concentration is the essence of education and character its ultimate purpose; and
- ♥ that the human personality can reach out towards excellence through an articulated pattern of integral learning, and thus attain the expression of its full potential.

Just as it is true that mighty oaks grow from tiny acorns, if we want peace and happiness to flourish in our society, we need to expose our children to the highest ideals from the earliest years of their lives. Only thus will their noblest character blossom, as they grow and develop into caring and responsible adults, able to meet life's challenges with resourcefulness and inner strength.

"There are two kinds of knowledge: One relates to the knowledge of external things; the head manifests this power. The heart enables to bring out the inner knowledge. Life will become ideal when both these types of knowledge are made to manifest in harmony. These have been called Education and Educare."

Based on the philosophy of EduCare², SSEHV aims at stimulating the emergence of the positive qualities, talents and potential of goodness that lie latent in the human heart. To do so, it follows a pedagogy of integral education, which is complemented by the universal values of:

¹ N.B.: All quotes without reference are by Sathya Sai Baba.

² Linked to the Latin word *educere*, which means to elicit and draw out.

- ♥ Truth,
- ♥ Right Action,³
- ♥ Peace,
- ♥ Love, and
- ♥ Non-violence.

The system aims at developing the whole human being rather than the transmission of information related to subject areas. Through systematic, creative and experiential inquiry into a series of related value aspects, applicable to every day life, the broad scope of these values is acknowledged and their practice encouraged. This approach to learning, together with academic instruction, helps the child's heart, mind and soul unfold into fuller understanding and awareness, bringing unity of heart, head and hand, as it forms and transforms character.

"Plant a thought and reap an action. Plant an action and reap a habit. Plant a habit and reap a character. Plant a character and reap a destiny."

³ Right Conduct, Right Action, Righteous Action or Conduct and Righteousness are used interchangeably in this text.

AIMS OF SATHYA SAI EDUCATION

The Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme aims not only at forming but primarily at *transforming* character. Its threefold purpose is to promote:

- ♥ character excellence,
- ♥ academic excellence, and
- ♥ ethical and moral excellence.

Among its goals, it wishes to provide all children with the following opportunities:

- ♥ to learn to know themselves and cultivate a positive internal dialogue;
- ♥ to learn about the profound value of their own roots and cultural heritage;
- ♥ to learn about other cultures, traditions and religions, and have a deeper understanding of the brotherhood of men and women of every race;
- ♥ to respect the 5 Human Values of Love, Truth, Right Action, Peace and Non-violence, and practise them in their own lives.
- ♥ to make ethical decisions by developing a sense of personal responsibility, with respect for the rights, life and dignity of all people;
- ♥ to build self-confidence and self-discipline, and learn the importance of concentration;
- ♥ to develop social skills, enabling them to resolve conflicts, solve problems, make decisions and work cooperatively;
- ♥ to develop respect for the environment;
- ♥ to promote a culture of peace by becoming peaceful human beings;
- ♥ to develop Faith and Love for Goodness; and
- ♥ to cultivate a sense of wonder and respect towards all Creation.

To pursue its aims, SSEHV emphasizes the importance of values such as:

- ♥ integrity, wisdom, common sense, creativity and discrimination (Truth);
- ♥ respect for parents and teachers, honesty, good manners, good behaviour and regard for duty (Right Conduct);
- ♥ humility, simplicity, tolerance, patience, satisfaction (Peace);
- ♥ gentleness, compassion, forgiveness, gratitude, kindness, caring for others, friendliness (Love); and
- ♥ concern for the environment, unity, harmony, social awareness, respect for all religions (Non-violence).

THE METHOD

*"Love in thought is Truth
Love in action is Right Action
Love in feeling is Peace
Love in understanding is Non-violence"*

It is well known that today's schooling is mostly intellectual and skill-oriented, while it does little to develop good qualities, such as character and common sense. Having lost its authority over the moral behaviour of its students, it fails to promote self-control, virtues and a conscientious attitude towards life in general. It so follows that, if on one hand our children are being asked to grow fast to enable themselves to enter the world race... on the other, they have no guidance, sense of direction or idea of what 'it is all about'.

SSEHV proposes a development programme that focuses on laying the foundation for a better quality of life, based on human, moral and spiritual values, a sense of purpose and meaning, care for others and the natural world. It does so by offering new strategies in the field of education. Rooted in the principle of Educare, it assures experience with the values, which, when practised, make virtues a natural state of being.

The values of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence are explored with the help of:

- ♥ quotation,
- ♥ story telling,
- ♥ group singing,
- ♥ silent sitting, and
- ♥ group activity.

When body, mind and soul blossom in unison, unity of thought, word and action is the result. If, at the same time, children are reared with the understanding that life does not depend solely on the acquisition of material goods and values, it will be easier to turn their attention towards noble pursuits and higher ideals. This is intrinsically possible for SSEHV as its philosophy lies on the firm conviction that there is an inherent power of beauty, truth and goodness within each individual, awaiting to be kindled and empowered through action. The role of the teacher and parent is to facilitate its emergence.

"There is an organic link between the human values and the human personality. Mental happiness comes from peace, peace comes from love, love is linked to non-violence, non-violence is the outcome of righteous conduct, righteous conduct without truth cannot be thought of. Thus, the five values of love, peace, non-violence, righteous conduct and truth, representing the major facets of the human personality, are the petals of the same flower."

THE KEY DIFFERENCE

"Educare is not the learning from books by rote, to be vomited in the examination halls. But it is the learning from life, which is absorbed into living and transforming. This gives new meaning to dull mathematics and geography, a new vitality to language, cosmic understanding to science and an enhanced beauty to music and art. It is not to be stuffed from without into the ears of innocent children. Rather it comes from within. It is the release of the inherent intuition and divinity, which is within each individual... Educare is also the art of ensuring a perfect constant balance, by managing the mind and the inputs from the five senses, so that the surge of Divine energy from within flows uninterrupted. In other words, a harmony between thought, word and deed has to be achieved in such a manner that the physical world is perceived as an extension of the spiritual world... Educare is when we have sensitised ourselves, when we sensitise our children to begin to respond and become caring people."

Information for transformation is a process of self-knowledge that shifts from imposed discipline to self-discipline. As the child grasps how the play of his/her senses, emotions and mind can be carefully watched, improved and corrected, he/she becomes more self-aware, confident and independent. The secret of self-discipline is among the greatest gifts we can give to our children. It is the result of becoming familiar with the wisdom of the heart that expresses itself through the *conscience*. Appreciation of this aspect of the human being, referred to as the *spiritual aspect*, unfolds as the child learns to acknowledge it and abide by it through experience.

The technique of silent sitting is a key tool in this direction, representing, among other things, a calming balm for restlessness and lack of concentration. It puts the children in touch with their true being, facilitating emotional growth and building awareness of self-worth. It is a tool for self-analysis, which helps the understanding of behaviour and behaviour-related problems, resulting in improved relationships.

Once children learn to tune in to their conscience, they will know from within what is right and what is wrong for them. Later, it will be easier for them to quieten mental agitation, making introspection a positive habit in their lives. In today's world, the ability to detach from outer turmoil and sensorial saturation is a skill that many strive for. By empowering our children with this skill, we offer them a constant point of reference and a source of well-being and inner peace that can be crucial when the boat of life is upset by the waves that arise along one's journey.

In this light, the appreciation of the spiritual aspect of the human being is the key difference of SSEHV: An aspect that unfolds and blossoms, revealing a hidden source of human value, indicating a common identity among all human beings, before which differences of skin colour, culture or language are superficial.

"Spirituality calls for the recognition of the manifold capacities manifesting in man as emanating from the Spirit and not from the mind. Spirituality means making man manifest the divinity in him. It is the realization of the role of the Spirit in daily life."

A THOUGHT-PROVOKING STORY

A wealthy businessman had been invited to make the opening speech at an international fair, which was to be held on a remote island far from his home country. After a long and tiresome journey, he landed in the capital of a big city, drove across the city's outskirts into the open countryside, hit the coast and finally reached the seaport. There, according to his agenda, a ferry would be waiting for him.

But his plans were soon upset: The ferries had already covered their daily schedule to and from the island, and the only way to be there that evening, in time for the inaugurating ceremony, was to go by rowboat.

The boatman, a common fellow, greeted his unusual passenger. "This gentleman isn't just anybody," he thought, feeling proud to be able to offer the services of his humble boat to someone so distinct and fine-looking.

Hesitantly, his new commuter got into the shaky little boat, sat down on the small wooden beam and took out the daily journal from his dark brown briefcase as nonchalantly as he could. The boatman sat in front of him and started rowing towards the island.

"Say, have you heard about the recent political scandal in Europe?" inquired the businessman. "It's quite something, isn't it? made the headlines of every newspaper!"

The boatman faltered: "No, I haven't heard about it, sir. I don't read the paper."

"You don't?" The businessman eyed the oarsman from tip to toe. "I don't see how you can organize your life without being updated on world affairs! I'm terribly sorry to have to say so, but 25% of your life is a sheer waste."

The boatman silently continued to row towards the island.

"I assume that you at least read about the recent collapse of the stock market!" said the high hat business man.

"The fact, sir," replied the boatman, "... is that I do not know *how* to read. I'm sorry, sir."

"You mean to say that you're an illiterate?! Goodness me! Why then, you have wasted 50% of your life!" blurted the businessman. "Now hurry up ... I'm just losing my time with you!"

He looked around. The sky had turned suddenly dark. "My watch must be broken. What time is it?" he stammered.

The boatman continued rowing. "Time, sir? I wouldn't know, sir... I don't wear a watch. Actually... I never learned how to read the time... I'm a simple man, sir."

“But that’s unheard of!” shouted the businessman furiously. “How can you live without a watch...?! How miserable! 75% of your life is a waste. Do you know that?”

The boatman bent his head. He didn’t understand what had made the elegant-looking gentleman so unhappy.

“Hey! You! Look here!” cried the businessman pointing to the bottom of the boat. “Look at my shoes! There must be a hole in your boat! My feet are drenched!”

Black clouds moved fast across the sky, thunder roared and a sudden outpour broke through. The waves became stronger and more threatening, as they hit the boat back and forth, up and down.

The boatman stopped rowing and looked up at his passenger. “Do you know how to swim?” he asked.

“Swim?!” barked the businessman. “I’ve been busy with more important affairs to have time to learn... degrees to secure, dissertations to defend, upgrading courses to attend... I never had time to learn how to swim!”

The boatman calmly addressed his passenger. “I’m awfully sorry, sir, but I have to give you some bad news. Your whole life has been a sheer waste, because now you are surely to drown!”

THE FIVE HUMAN VALUES → TRUTH

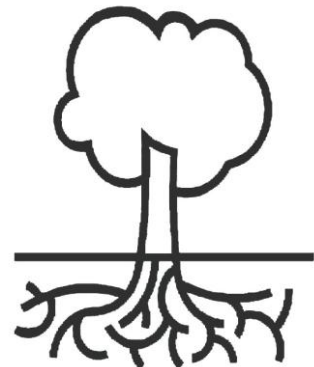
"Education must instil the fundamental human values. Education must promote ethical behaviour. It must foster self-control. This is the essential function of education."

The virtues that flow from the Human Value of Truth are many. The child begins to relate to it by learning not to lie – first to others, later to him/herself. To abide by truth means cultivating truthfulness, honesty and sincerity, self-analysis and purity, accuracy and fairness, fearlessness and integrity. When truth is 'my truth' and 'your truth' (i.e., subjective or relative), the child learns that there are many facets related to it. This truth can change and continue to change, according to experience, age, perspective, culture and belief system. However, when searching for a lasting truth that withstands relativity, the values of discernment, intuition, justice, quest for knowledge, spirit of enquiry, and synthesis, are nurtured and enhanced.

"What exactly is Truth? Is it a description of a thing as one has seen it without exaggeration and understatement? No. Or, the narration of an incident in the same words as one has heard it narrated? No. Truth elevates. It holds forth ideals. It inspires the individuals in the society. It is the light that illumines man's path to God."

Truth has been sought throughout the ages and philosophers have affirmed that beyond the borders of the individual, egocentric self, there is a deeper reality and a higher self, far more true. SSEHV covers all these aspects of truth, by exploring the outer world of phenomenon – the world we see, touch and feel – and the inner world – the world of *being, conscience and consciousness*, which is the root cause of all the rest, as are the roots of a tree, of the trunk, branches, leaves and fruits.

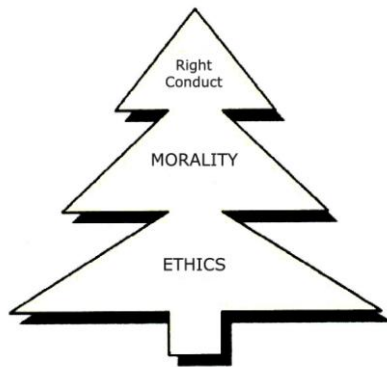
Wishing to offer his son, Svetaketu, the idea and taste of Truth, the sage Udalaka Aruni sent the boy to fetch a red fruit from the banyan tree. When the boy brought the fruit, his father said: "Cut it in half." The son did as he was told. "What is there inside?" asked his father. "There are countless seeds." "Take one seed and cut it into half," said the boy's father. After much effort and patience, Svetaketu succeeded in cutting one tiny seed. "What is there, inside it?" asked his father. "There is nothing inside father." "Oh, my child, a tree like this cannot grow out of nothing." "Truly father, there is nothing." "That which you call nothing, is something that eyes cannot see – something invisible from which this huge tree grows. That is power, that is invisible spirit which pervades everything and is the root of everything that exists."



Chandogyee Upanishad

To look for and ascertain what is real and true, is ever more relevant in today's world which offers a virtual and artificially-made society to our children. By bringing to light the facets of truth, the faculty of discrimination – which enables good, wholesome decision-making and a safe journey through life – is fostered and developed.

THE FIVE HUMAN VALUES → RIGHT CONDUCT



"There is a need to rethink and broaden the notion of lifelong education. Not only must it adapt to changes in the nature of work, but it must also constitute a continuous process of forming whole human beings – their knowledge and aptitudes, as well as the critical faculty and the ability to act. It should enable people to develop awareness of themselves and their environment, and encourage them to play their social role at work and in the community."

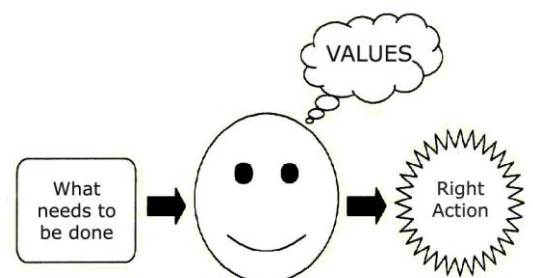
Jacques Delors in "Education: The Necessary Utopia"

Children learn about Right Conduct by being exposed to examples of people who excelled in righteousness and virtuous living. Stories portray the living application of human values in real-life context and have a great effect on the children, who easily retain the messages the stories convey. When right conduct is associated with oneself, the character attributes of self-care, hygiene and proper eating habits, cleanliness, posture, resourcefulness and self-sufficiency, are fostered. Children learn how to look after and use their bodies, acknowledging that they need to be strong, healthy and well-coordinated to perform any task in life. Likewise they learn to appreciate fresh air, exercise and a balanced diet.

Good thoughts and good company are essential for healthy living and a well-balanced development too. Learning how to watch one's thoughts is an essential part of Right Conduct. Thinking is one of the most fundamental characteristics of human life and children need to recognize its power: Thoughts give way to ideas, concepts, behaviour patterns and life styles; in time, they shape our societies. It is of utmost importance to teach children to be responsible in deciding what type or quality of thoughts they wish to harbour and create.

When Right Conduct is associated with others, the value takes the form of good behaviour, respect for others, helpfulness, capacity to cultivate good relationships. It later broadens into ethical skills and morality, developing attributes such as courage, ecological sensitisation, determination, initiative, sense of duty. Finally, the highest level of Right Conduct results when we act in accordance with our conscience and carry out thoughts and intentions that are rooted in love. If the child is reared in accordance with the Educare philosophy, to seek the guidance of conscience and to establish an inner dialogue, good behaviour and ethical choices will be the natural output.

The child will become more pro-active, capable of making inner choices of which he/she is conscious, rather than simply acting unconsciously on the spur of the moment, or from habits or familiar customs that have never been questioned.



THE FIVE HUMAN VALUES → PEACE

"Let there be peace in the world and let it begin with me."

Dr. Robert Muller – Unesco Prize for Peace Education 1989

All values are interconnected, and have diversified levels of meaning. When talking about Peace, one tends to think 'peace', by recalling the lack of it, focusing on conflict and war, and on the hopes of humankind to realise unity among people and achieve peace at a world-wide level. Seldom does one realise that to seek peace in life and for the world is not a political issue, but an individual choice of self- development. It means living up to the value, and securing a state of inner peace within oneself.

Learning how to calm the emotions and still the mind is a first step in nurturing inner peace. SSEHV introduces the teaching aid of *silent sitting* to facilitate this process. At the beginning the child may feel uneasy, distracted by an uncontrolled body and talkative mind. However, as he/she learns to sit quietly for a few minutes, silence sets in. When the exercise of silent sitting is done in a peaceful atmosphere, supported by the presence of a candle, it becomes a treasured moment. The students cherish the positive feelings it brings with it and recognize its benefits. Silent sitting has the ability to calm and reorient impulsive and careless tendencies, improves memory and concentration, and fosters patience, detachment and self-confidence.

When our minds are quiet, our emotions are in a state of balance; when there is no inner war going on and our desires are kept under control, a feeling of peace and contentment fills our hearts. These feelings respond with feelings of harmony, happiness and profound gratitude. As we begin to reach towards a more subtle and intuitive region, we wake up to this intuition, becoming capable of receiving and expressing it.

Silent sitting uncovers the potential of self-worth. When the children learn the importance of keeping that worth as a priority in their life, they grow in self-respect, dignity, integrity, and cultivate commitment to fundamental human values.

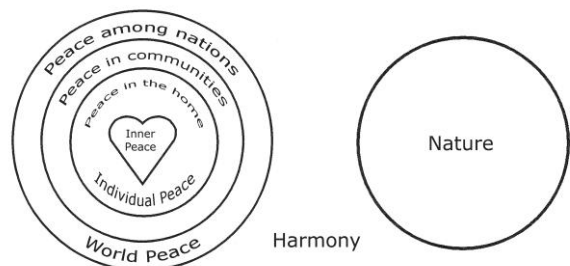
Silent sitting can be easily included for a few minutes at the beginning of every school day and as a closing session of any lesson. Peace manifests in action when one acts in accordance with the heart; it is only in inner silence that the voice of the conscience can be heard.

"When there is peace in the individual, there will be peace in the family.

When there is peace in the family, there will be peace in the community.

When there is peace in the community, there will be peace in the nation.

When there is peace in the nation, there will be peace in the world."



THE FIVE HUMAN VALUES → LOVE

"You teach love to children only through love."

Love is like a radiant sun that spreads its rays in all directions, nurturing and vivifying with its warmth and light. It is the undercurrent of all other values. Children learn about it by being exposed to its tender ways and sweet words. It manifests at various levels: in the form of the love of the mother and father for their children, affection between husband and wife, fondness for family members and friends, devotion to one's motherland, appreciation for nature, yearning for God.

Though love is expressed through feeling, it is, in truth, energy: it flows, joins, heals and transforms; when it is pure, it is unchanging. This is when love corresponds to the highest truth and the purest goodness. Where love is, selfishness is not and joy is abundant.

By exploring the value of love, supported by the curriculum of Sathya Sai Education, children grasp its diversified meanings. Stories, positive thoughts and quotation, group singing and group activity, are all forms that relate the tale of love. It is easy for them to learn that when you bear good, loving thoughts, your heart is filled with joy and your face is lit with happiness. Children implicitly understand that love resides in the core of their being. As they learn to seek counsel and guidance from their heart (before any thought can turn into an action...), they deepen their understanding of virtues, such as humility, thoughtfulness, and kindness.

True love is selfless and children know at once when it is unconditional. It is the only power capable of conquering and transforming the most terrible enemies of humankind: ego, anger, greed, envy, pride, hatred, attachment and fear. It fosters attentiveness and care for others, tolerance, understanding and forgiveness, openness and trust.

When children learn that the same loving energy resides in all beings, they intuitively know that it is the heart of values too. It is through love that they learn to appreciate the richness of diversity and to appraise the values of cooperation, helping and sharing. Love ushers the children towards the threshold of a new perspective: they see the world as one family and gradually grasp the interconnectedness of all creation.

"When love is expressed in action it becomes Right Action.

When love is expressed in thought, it becomes Truth.

When love is expressed in feeling, it becomes Peace.

When love is expressed in understanding, it becomes Non-violence."

THE FIVE HUMAN VALUES → NON-VIOLENCE

"Today humanity is in decline because life lacks balance. If we promote Human Values, we will be able to maintain the right harmony in life."

When inner truth is followed, actions are good, there is unity in thought, word and deed, and a state of contentment and peace prevail in the individual. When the family is filled with feelings of sympathy, understanding and love, this extends to the community, the nation and the world as well. The outcome of this virtuous cycle is non-violence. Non-violence is the zenith of human achievement, the practice of which is the ultimate expression of the harmony of head, heart and hands (thought, feeling and action). It can be understood on three levels: personal, societal and universal.

Personal non-violence involves respect for one's personal well-being, as well as that of others. Children become aware of the effects of their actions and emotions, learn self-control over negative thoughts, and the importance of forbearance and pardon.

Social non-violence encompasses a sympathetic regard for all life. It includes refraining from bad company, criticism and inconsiderate speech.

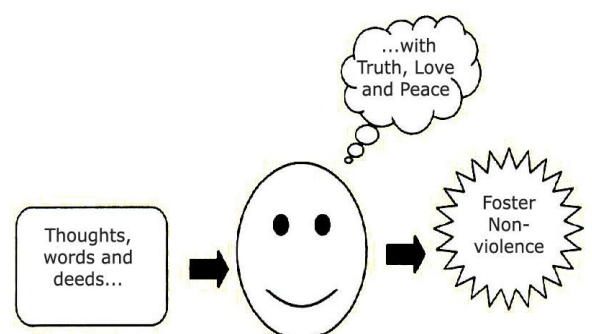
Universal non-violence is kindled by a sense of kinship with all forms of life and the earth itself, and brings understanding of unity in diversity.

Non-violence is easily grasped by children when it is associated to not hurting plants, animals or feelings, and in correlation to what is obviously contrary to love: violence, conflict and war. They quickly grasp that being non violent, does not only mean abstaining from physical violence, but also from causing pain by a word, a glance or a gesture.

Non-violence instils a sense of morality, equality and respect for the rights of all human beings; it fosters appreciation of all cultures and religions, as well as ecological concern and awareness. It is an expression of universal love that promotes unity among people and a sense of being part of a whole. Non-violence springs forth from a feeling of inner identity with life at large, and as such it represents the spiritual aspect of the human being. It is this aspect that inspires and sets in motion:

- ♥ a feeling of awe and wonder for the universe;
- ♥ the desire to improve the quality of life for everyone;
- ♥ a feeling of oneness with the planet and love for everything on it;
- ♥ an awareness of an underlying order to creation; and
- ♥ Love and respect for the diversity of the human family.

The group activities component of SSEHV, offers opportunities to practise and learn by experience. Human values are brought to the forefront when children cooperate and work together, find solutions together and harmonise differences.



THE TRIPLE PARTNERSHIP

THE CHILD

"Children are generally good by nature and willing to do their duty and shine well in studies. One cause of their waywardness and occasional indiscipline lies with their elders who set poor examples of truth and self-control."

Children growing up in today's world are exposed to countless influences. It is not only teachers and parents who affect children, but also their surroundings, including television, films, videos, internet, video-games, cell phones, etc. In school, most students are under tremendous pressure to "succeed" and to pass examinations. Education, which does not stress character development, or is not value-oriented, allows children to grow up with a false set of priorities and values; they do not know how to cope with their life or with the world around them. Children usually learn that being successful means wanting to get a good job and earning plenty of money, rather than wanting to work for the betterment of society and the world.

THE TEACHER

"The teacher has the greatest role in moulding the future of the country. Of all professions, his or hers is the noblest, the most difficult and the most important. If a teacher is dedicated and pure, thousands of children can be improved and the nation will gain from educated men and women of character."

Good teachers are those who realise the worth and importance of their work and treat the children they teach as if they were their own. For children to imbibe good values, it is important that teachers practise them themselves and be examples to their students. This cannot be stressed enough. A teacher who is loving and kind, who is patient and filled with humility, will play a very vital role in building the good character of the students.

THE PARENTS

"Discipline is the mark of intelligent living. Parents should not allow children to fall away from their control, and wander about without compass or anchor. Many parents feed and fondle their children, and, then, in the name of freedom, leave them to find their own friends and pleasures. They take them to films regardless of the impression they create on their tender minds. They entertain the friends of their children, but do not enquire into their antecedents of habits. They even encourage their children to smoke and drink, not knowing they will one day have to rue their action."

The influence of parents on the children's minds is very significant. It is actually the primary and predominant influence on the children's personality and behaviour pattern. The early years of a child's life are the most important for character development. Therefore, the role of parents is vital as they are the first teachers. Parents have the responsibility to be good role models for their children, which means that they must practise what they want them to follow. If parents and teachers set the right example, students will automatically blossom into models of excellence.

THE FOUNDER

"Just as two wings are essential for a bird to fly high in the sky, two wheels for a cart to move, so too the two types of education are needed for man to attain the goal of life. Spiritual education is for life, whereas worldly education is for a living. Only when man is equipped with these two aspects of education, can he be deserving of respect and adoration in society."

The Sathya Sai Education in human values programme draws its inspiration from the moral and spiritual teachings of Sathya Sai Baba (1926-2011), the most widely respected educator of contemporary India, internationally revered as an outstanding world teacher. As Chancellor of the Sri Sathya Sai University in Prashanti Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh, India, Sathya Sai Baba founded schools, colleges and universities in several states of India, which are renowned for their academic excellence, high moral and ethical standards. He said that: *"Good education is that which teaches the method of achieving world peace; that which destroys narrow-mindedness and promotes unity, equality and peaceful co-existence among human beings."*

For the past seventy years, Sathya Sai Baba set an example for countless people around the globe, exhibiting the ideals he professed not only in innumerable public speeches and writings, but also concretely, through unprecedented social work and non-stop service activities.

By drawing attention to the great religious heritage of our world, he aimed at fostering a deeper understanding of the common basis and shared values of all religions. This he did for the benefit of all people. He went farther, suggesting that the universal values of truth, righteousness, peace, love and non-violence do not belong to any religion in particular; they are the very life breaths of all human beings, without which life itself would be devoid of meaning, scope and purpose.

Intending a high degree of integrity in which thought, word and deed are unified and aligned with conscience, Sathya Sai Baba:

- ♥ highlighted the importance of character – which, in his words, constitutes “the very end of education”; and
- ♥ he quoted Tennyson,⁴ stressing that self-respect, self-knowledge and self-control are among the main goals of righteous living, which constitutes the foundation for the welfare of humanity.

Sathya Sai Education, or ‘Educare’, has been designed with the awareness that a complete process of education implies the dissemination of knowledge, perfected by human virtue. It places emphasis on the fact that the practice of virtue can be easily prompted and elicited from within each child, when teaching is value-oriented and complemented by a programme that places a ceiling on desires.

"What is culture? You think it is a style of life. No. Culture is that which makes life into an ideal life."

⁴ The exact quote is: "Self-reverence, Self-knowledge, Self-control - these three alone lead man to sovereign power." DD 31 December 1984.

SUMMARY

*"The end of wisdom is freedom. The end of culture is perfection.
The end of knowledge is love. The end of education is character."*

Normally one watches life, as he/she would look at the surface of the ocean, entertained by the coming and going of the ripples and waves. The fact that underneath there is depth and an immense portion of unexplored life, is often forgotten. But a few lucky passers-by choose to seek the invaluable abundance in life and take their chances by diving deep into its mysteries. What they wish to secure are the unseen treasures that lie therein like hidden pearls. It is in this light that SSEHV wishes to trigger a spirit of enquiry in today's children, motivating and encouraging them to embark on their journey through life with confidence and trust. By pointing at a unifying core of existence that brings science and spirituality together, it offers a constant and unchanging point of reference, sowing the seed of self-understanding and self-awareness.

The message to parents and teachers is that they should not only be content when students acquire knowledge and skills that enable them merely to earn their living. Their concern should be equally directed at giving them an education that would help them develop the best in themselves. This would enable the children to reach their full potential. That is a choice that would rely on the fact that *"to learn for the sake of knowledge, to study in order to know the secrets of Nature and life, to educate oneself in order to grow in consciousness, to discipline oneself in order to become master of oneself, to overcome one's weaknesses, incapacities and ignorance, to prepare oneself to advance in life towards a goal that is nobler and vaster, more generous and more true... is not utopian."*⁵

Flexible enough to be adapted to all cultures and traditions, the goals of the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme are integral and holistic. The programme does not only uplift human personality by closing the circle of outer investigation with inner inquiry, but fosters cooperation, unity and world peace as well. SSEHV can be implemented either directly, by adopting value lesson plans or indirectly by integrating value focus within the regular school curricula. Moreover, it can be easily adapted to an endless array of extra-curricular activities. Teachers and parents together, who are trained in SSEHV, hold the key to the effectiveness of the programme. Their commitment to practising the values in their own lives and living up to them, will ensure the impact it will have on the children, who imitate the examples they are exposed to.

The Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Programme:

- ♥ invites the children to WATCH: their Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart;
- ♥ promotes Self-Confidence, the foundation of the mansion of human life;
- ♥ stresses that education is not meant merely to earn one's living, but for life; and
- ♥ affirms the human potential for excellence.

⁵ The Mother – Education part I – 1989.

"Often without realising it, the world has a longing, often unexpressed, for an ideal and for values that we shall term 'moral'. It is thus education's noble task to encourage each and everyone, acting in accordance with their traditions and convictions and paying full respect to pluralism, to lift their minds and spirits to the plane of the universal and, in some measure, to transcend themselves. It is no exaggeration on the Commission's part to say that the survival of humanity depends thereon."

Jacques Delors in "Learning: the Treasure within". (Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century)

CONCLUSION

SSEHV is non-denominational and compatible with all cultures and religious creeds. Its essence and universal significance can be compared to a small kernel: when planted into local soil, it sprouts and gives life to a SSEHV Tree. This tree blossoms in harmony with one's environment, culture and traditions. The programme is adaptable to all curricula and offers a meeting point for current trends in value-oriented education. It furthermore supports the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Art. 26 - December 10, 1948), which says:

"Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace."






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SATHYA SAI EDUCATION IN HUMAN VALUES PROGRAMME - VALUES AND VALUE ASPECTS

TRUTH	RIGHT ACTION	PEACE	LOVE	NON VIOLENCE
				
<p>Belief</p> <p>Common Sense Courage Conviction Discrimination (distinguishing between right and wrong) Faith Faithfulness Goodness Honesty Integrity Intuition Justice Following/Listening to the conscience Quest for Truth Reason Respect Self-awareness Self-confidence Self-inquiry Synthesis Trustworthiness Truthfulness Unity in diversity Oneness of all things Wisdom</p>	<p>Personal Skills</p> <p>Attention to Duty Ceilings on desires Composure Concentration Conduct/Habits Determination Discrimination Efficiency Environmental cleanliness Goal Setting Following/Listening to conscience Moderation of food Orderliness Perseverance Personal hygiene Proper eating habits Proper nutrition Proper use of time Regulation Self-confidence Self-control Self-reliance Willpower</p> <p>Ethical Skills</p> <p>Appreciation Dedication Forbearance Fortitude Goodness Morality Right deeds Right speech Right thoughts Trustworthiness Unity of thought, word, and deed</p>	<p>Balance Calmness Commitment Conflict Resolution Contentment Detachment Discipline Endurance Enthusiasm Equanimity Faith Happiness Humility Intelligence Joy Moderation Optimism Patience Purity Serenity Self-acceptance Self-control Self-respect Simplicity Selflessness Service Virtue</p>	<p>Acceptance Affection Beauty Commitment Compassion Consideration Cooperation Dedication Devotion Faith Faithfulness Forbearance Forgiveness Friendship Generosity Gratitude Helpfulness Honor Humility Joy Loyalty Patriotism Respect Reverence Self-respect Sharing Surrender Sympathy Thoughtfulness Trust Trustworthiness Understanding Wisdom</p>	<p>Appreciation for cultures and religions Benevolence Ceiling on Desires Cooperation Citizenship Conscientiousness Forbearance Global awareness Harmlessness Interrelatedness of all living things Reverence for nature and the earth Sacrifice Selfless service Social justice Tolerance Unconditional love Understanding Unity Unity in diversity Universal selfless love Wisdom</p>